



Main Street Congregational Church

145 Main Street, Amesbury MA 01913

July 20, 2025 - Yes

(Psalm 91, Romans 8:38-39)

I am a fan, usually, of the New York Times Connections game. It's the one where you figure out which four words are connected to each other. I do pretty well at it, sometimes, but when the category is superpowers I generally miss it. I don't know the people, the names, the current stuff. At least not the ones they chose. I look for God, Allah, Yahweh, el Shaddai. That is the superpower I want to undergird my life. That's the force I want to have shape my words, spending, use of time, compassion. The other super powers? They have their place in reminding us about goodness and power and give us both positive and negative depictions of power in play. Bring on the movies or books if you like them but I don't want to lose track of the sacred super power whom I call God.

It's kind of easy to lose track of that Holy Mystery present and active in our world. There is not a huge advertising budget or well developed social media campaign designed to suck us in, make us scared, shut down our creativity, deny our interconnectedness. All day long messages and stories come at us, backed by big money and powerful people. We are told to be scared of others, to grasp on to our stuff and to conform. We are told that if we buy the right things, live in the right place and keep the perfect company it will all be spectacular. Loud, constantly coming at us. Cultural values and norms.

Beloved, we are gathered around a different truth. One that is enduring and consistent. It doesn't have glitzy advertising. It can be overlooked in the ruckus and pressure of daily doing. The still small voice of God. Present. Powerful. Persistent. Penetrating.

The Psalmist describes God as a refuge. Paul declares there is nothing that can separate us from God's love - neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

I need to hear this declaration often. I need to be intentional in looking toward the presence of the holy or else the other stuff gets in the way. When that happens the headlines pull me to the depths of despair, the strained relationships leave me bitter. Anyone else know or feel that?

But the presence and power of God? The expanse of the stars in the night sky seen and beyond our sight? The words of comfort and support of community? The effect of music? The awe and wonder is all around us even when so much is upside down and unsettled. God does not need serenity in order to be a force for healing and resurrection but rather God's healing and resurrecting love active in the chaos is what brings us peace. Of this we can be certain. God is present. God will remain. This matters. Corrie Ten Boom said, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."

I didn't know about Corrie Ten Boom but read a memoir last week (thanks to Pastor Siri and her Holy Disrupter series for introducing me). Corrie lived in the Dutch city of Haarlem and was raised by devout Christians who had a robust prayer life and were supportive of numerous

charitable causes. Her family ran a watch repair shop and it rather easily could be adapted and used for resistance and rescue work in World War II. The shop became a meeting place for members of the resistance, a transfer station for ration books to support Jewish people in hiding and eventually a hiding place was built in their home. In 1943 they took in those people who were hard to place in other settings. In 1944 the authorities raided their home but 6 people (Jews and members of the resistance) concealed themselves and were eventually transferred to other locations. Corrie was arrested, imprisoned and detained in 2 concentration camps. After the war she helped administer a home for people who had survived concentration camps and did rehabilitation work with Dutch collaborators and German perpetrators.

Her memoirist suggested that Corrie wasn't particularly ingenious but that it was her willingness to say yes repeatedly that allowed her to make such a difference. She said yes to a movement of people committed to resistance. It was her faith that encouraged her in the face of danger. She understood God was not one who controlled everything and people had free will. She believed those sucked in Hitler's insanity were closed off to God. She saw her call to help those closed off to God to come to know God. When asked where God was in the Holocaust Corrie would say God was in the underground resistance, in the changing of a heart here and there. God was in the peace that made no sense in the middle of hell. Corrie said "worrying is carrying tomorrow's load with today's strength - carrying two days at once. It is moving into tomorrow ahead of time. Worrying doesn't empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength."

I stayed up way too late to finish her memoir, it so caught my heart. Her bold actions and strong faith. I don't know how bold my actions will be in the current challenges - that is unfolding. I hear others express that same question and wonder what to do, what they are willing to do. I do know that we have a God who is present and powerful and available to us. Maybe instead of trying to figure out what we are supposed to do next we might focus our attention and time on God in our midst. Let that love into us to reshape and support us. And as that love flows we will discover what God is asking of us and we will have the faith and trust to say yes. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. That love makes good trouble. As Corrie Ten Boom said, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." Amen.

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July 20, 2025

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